

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of City of Lincoln/Lancaster County, seeking funding approval for recurring and non-recurring costs of Enhanced Wireless 911 implementation.

) Application No. 911-023.36
)
) ORDER DENYING FUNDING
) REQUEST
)
) Entered: August 1, 2007
)

BY THE COMMISSION:

By written request for funding received February 8, 2007, Lincoln/Lancaster County sought funding from the Enhanced Wireless 911 Fund for expenses of implementing and providing enhanced wireless 911 service. The request included in-house administrative costs related to the implementation of Phase I and Phase II enhanced wireless 911 service totaling **\$8,551.48** and annual in-house costs for the maintenance of GIS data in the amount of **\$12,750.57**.

The Enhanced Wireless 911 Advisory Board considered these requests at its March 23, 2007 meeting. A motion to approve the request for reimbursement of in-house administrative costs failed. However, the Board recommended approval for the in-house costs for the maintenance of GIS data.

Based upon the Advisory Board's recommendation and the nature of the funding requested, the Commission conducted a hearing regarding the matter on June 12, 2007.

Julie Righter testified in support of Lincoln/Lancaster County's funding requests. Ms. Righter stated that the amounts requested reflect payroll costs of two individuals. One maintains GIS data for the county. The other individual is involved with Phase II implementations and testing of new wireless towers. She further testified that the time spent by these individuals on these matters is strictly attributable to enhanced wireless 911 service. Each amount requested is based upon their current hourly rate including benefits.

OPINION AND FINDINGS

Pursuant to the Enhanced Wireless 911 Service Act,¹ the following purposes ***may*** be eligible for funding from the Enhanced Wireless 911 Service Fund (Fund),

(b) Costs incurred or to be incurred by public safety answering points to implement enhanced wireless 911 service may include, but not be limited to, purchases

¹ Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 86-442 et seq. (2006 Cum. Supp.).

of new equipment, costs of upgrades, modification and personnel training used solely to process the data elements of enhanced wireless 911 service, and maintenance costs and license fees for new equipment;

(c) Costs incurred or to be incurred by public safety answering points for the purchase, installation, maintenance, and operation of telecommunications equipment and telecommunications services required for the provision of enhanced wireless 911 service;²

Although costs sought by Lancaster County are not specifically set forth, the list of eligible costs is not exclusive. It remains within the Commission's discretion, in consultation with the Advisory Board, to determine which costs are eligible for reimbursement.

The Commission recognizes that larger counties have employed individuals to specifically handle aspects of the implementation and provision of enhanced wireless 911 service. We are also keenly aware of the budget constraints faced by many local governments. However, the Commission must balance the limited resources available through the Fund and the significant needs statewide. The potential impact on the Fund could be substantial in light of the fact that some portion of personnel time from every PSAP could be attributable to the provision of wireless E911 service. The Commission has not previously provided such funding.

Providing reimbursement for the payroll costs for county and/or city personnel would significantly impact the availability of Funds for other costs associated with the implementation of enhanced wireless 911 service. Therefore, the Commission finds that Lancaster County's requests for funding for in-house personnel costs associated with the maintenance of GIS data and the administrative costs associated with Phase I and Phase II implementation should be denied.

O R D E R

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that Lincoln/Lancaster County's funding requests be denied.

² Neb. Rev. Stat. § 86-465(b) and (c) (2006 Cum. Supp.).

MADE AND ENTERED at Lincoln, Nebraska this 1st day of
August, 2007.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Chairman

ATTEST:

Executive Director